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Encyclical letter On the missions

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Princeps Pastorum

ENCYCLICAL LETTER

ON THE MISSIONS

HIS HOLINESS, POPE JOHN XXIII

(November 28, 1959)

NATIONAL CATHOLIC WELFARE CONFERENCE
1312 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington 5, D. C.

CATHOLIC CHURCH. POPE, 1958-1963
(JOANNES XXIII)
Princeps Pastorum. Enc

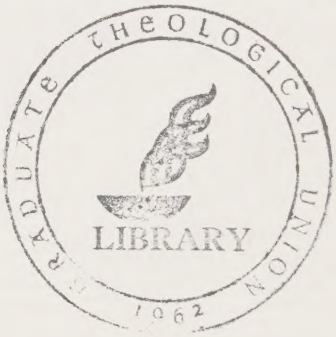
ENCYCLICAL LETTER

ON THE MISSIONS

HIS HOLINESS, POPE JOHN XXIII
(November 28, 1959)

AN ADDRESS TO MISSIONARIES
(October 16, 1959)

A PRAYER FOR MISSION CATHOLICS



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ENCYCLICAL LETTER

OF HIS HOLINESS

JOHN XXIII

BY DIVINE PROVIDENCE

POPE

ON CATHOLIC MISSIONS

FORTY YEARS AFTER PUBLICATION OF
POPE BENEDICT XV'S

APOSTOLIC LETTER *MAXIMUM ILLUD*

TO OUR VENERABLE BRETHREN

PATRIARCHS, PRIMATES, ARCHBISHOPS, BISHOPS

AND THE OTHER LOCAL ORDINARIES

IN PEACE AND COMMUNION WITH THE APOSTOLIC SEE

VENERABLE BRETHREN

HEALTH AND APOSTOLIC BENEDICTION

INTRODUCTION

Ever since the time when, answering with conscious humility the invitation of love of the "Prince of Shepherds"[1] but trustful in His very powerful assistance, We assumed the government and custody of the "sheep" and the "lambs" of the flock of God[2] scattered throughout the whole world, there has always been present in Our mind "the missionary problem in all its vastness, beauty and importance".[3]

Therefore, We have never ceased to give it Our most lively concern. And in the homily of the first anniversary of Our coronation We counted as among the most happy days of Our pontificate the eleventh of last October, when more than 500 missionaries gathered together in the sacrosanct Vatican basilica to receive the crucifix from Our hands before they spread throughout the world in the service of the Gospel. Divine Providence, in its adorable and loving designs, willed to direct Us to this field very early in Our priestly ministry. In fact, immediately after the first world war, Our predecessor Benedict

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XV, of venerable memory, deigned to call Us from Our native diocese to Rome, so that We might dedicate Ourself to the Office of the Propagation of the Faith, where We remained for four happy years of Our priestly life.

And the memory of that unforgettable Pentecost of 1922 is still vivid in Our memory, when We participated with deep joy here in Rome in the celebration of the third centenary of the foundation of the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, to which is precisely entrusted the duty of making the truth and the grace of the Gospel shine to the ends of the earth.

During those years also Our Predecessor of venerable memory, Pius XI, comforted Us with his word and example in the missionary apostolate, and from his lips We learned, on the eve of the conclave in which the Holy Ghost was to designate him as successor of Peter, that "nothing greater could be expected of a Vicar of Christ, whoever might be elected, than what is contained in this twofold ideal: Extraordinary dissemination of the evangelical doctrine throughout the world and the spirit of pacification."[4]

PATERNAL CONCERN OF THE SUPREME PONTIFF FOR THE MISSIONS

With Our mind full of these and other sweet memories, and conscious of the grave duties incumbent upon the Supreme Shepherd of the flock of God, We wish, venerable brothers, to take the opportunity of the 40th anniversary of the memorable Apostolic Letter *Maximum Illud*,[5] with which Our venerable predecessor Benedict XV gave new and decisive impetus to the missionary activity in the Church, to speak to you on the necessity and the hopes of the spread of the Kingdom of God in that great part of the world where the precious and fatiguing labor of the missionaries takes place, so that new Christian communities may rise and may bring forth salutary fruits.

Our predecessors Pius XI and Pius XII of venerable memory also issued timely norms and exhortations on this question through encyclicals,[6] which We Ourselves have wished "to confirm with Our authority and with equal charity" in Our first encyclical.[7] But certainly never enough will be done to bring about the fulfillment of the wish of the Divine Redeemer that all the lambs may be part of one single flock under the guidance of one single Shepherd.

In turning Our special attention to the supernatural interests of the Church in mission lands, there appear before Our eyes regions full for the harvest, regions in which the work of the laborers in the vineyard of God is particularly arduous, and also regions where the violence of persecution and the hostility of regimes to the name of God and of Christ strive to suffocate the seed of the word of the Lord.[9]

But everywhere there is the great need of souls and there reaches Us from everywhere the prayer "Help us".[10] Therefore, in all these areas, fecundated by the blood and apostolic sweat of the heroic heralds of the Gospel coming "from every nation under heaven,"[11] and where native apostles now spring up like the blossoming and fructification of grace, We wish that Our affectionate words of praise and encouragement should reach those places, together also with words of teaching which are nurtured by a great hope that does not fear being confounded, because it is based on the infallible promise of the Divine Master: "Behold, I am with you all days, even unto the consummation of the world."[12]

I. THE HIERARCHY AND THE LOCAL CLERGY

THE APPEAL OF THE EPISTLE *MAXIMUM ILLUD* FOR THE NATIVE CLERGY

Following the first world war, which brought bereavement, devastation and discomfort to such a great part of humanity, the apostolic letter *Maximum Illud* resounded as a cry of spiritual recovery for the new, peaceful conquests of the Kingdom of God, the only one that can assure to all men, sons of the Heavenly Father, lasting peace and true prosperity. Since then, in a very active and fruitful 40 years of missionary activity, a fact of the greatest importance has come to enrich the already happy progress of the missions: the development of the local hierarchy and clergy.

In conformity with the "ultimate aim" of missionary work, "which is that of building the Church in a stable way among other peoples and of entrusting it to its own hierarchy chosen from among the Christians of the place itself",[13] this Apostolic

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See has always provided opportunely and maturely—and in recent times with significant largess—to establish or to re-establish the ecclesiastical hierarchy in those regions where circumstances permitted and made it advisable to proceed to the constitution of episcopal sees, entrusting them when possible to native prelates of the locality.

No one, in fact, is unaware of the fact that this has been the constant program of action of the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith. It was, however, the epistle *Maximum Illud* that gave full evidence, more than ever before, to the importance and urgency of the problem, recalling once again, with heartfelt and pressing emphasis, the urgent duty of those who governed the missions to care for vocations and the education of that which was then called native clergy, not that this appellative had ever held a meaning of discrimination or belittlement such as must always be excluded from the language of the Roman pontiffs and from ecclesiastical documents.

PROVIDENT DEVELOPMENTS DURING THE PONTIFICATES OF PIUS XI AND PIUS XII

This appeal of Benedict XV, renewed by the successors Pius XI and Pius XII of venerable memory, has already had its providential and visible fruits, and We invite you to thank the Lord for this, Who raised up in the mission lands a numerous and elect legion of bishops and priests, Our beloved brothers and sons, thereby opening Our heart to the happiest hopes. A rapid glance, in fact, at the statistics alone on the territories entrusted to the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, not including those at present subjected to persecution, reveals that the first bishop of Asiatic origin was consecrated in 1923, and that the first apostolic vicars of African origin were named in 1939. By 1959 there were 68 bishops of Asiatic origin and 25 of African origin. The native clergy increased from 919 members in 1918 to 5,553 in 1957 in Asia, and from 90 members to 1,811 in the same period of time in Africa.

In this way the Lord of the harvest[14] has wished to reward the toils and the merits of all those who, through direct action and many collaborations, have dedicated themselves to the work of the missions according to the repeated teachings of this Apostolic See. It was therefore with reason that Our predecessor Pius XII of venerable memory could affirm with

rightful satisfaction: "At one time ecclesiastical life, insofar as is visible, developed abundantly, chiefly in the countries of old Europe, where it spread like majestic rivers to what could be called the limits of the earth; today, however, it appears like an exchange of life and energies between all the members of the Mystical Body of Christ upon earth. Many regions in other continents have long ago surpassed the missionary phase of their ecclesiastical organization and are governed by their own hierarchy and give spiritual and material goods to the whole Church, whereas before they only received them."[15]

To the episcopate and the clergy of the new churches We wish to address Our paternal exhortation that they may pray and act in a very special way so that their priesthood may become fruitful, and that they assume the task of speaking very often in catechetical instructions and in their preaching of the dignity, beauty, necessity and lofty merit of the priestly state, so that they might persuade all those whom God may wish to call to such a great honor to answer without delay and with generous spirit the divine vocation. May they also have the souls entrusted to them pray while the entire Church, according to the exhortation of the Divine Redeemer, may not cease to raise prayers to heaven for these same intentions, so that the Lord may "send forth laborers into his harvest,"[16] especially in these times when "the harvest indeed is great, but the laborers are few."[17]

FRATERNAL COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE LOCAL CLERGY AND THE MISSIONARIES OF OTHER COUNTRIES

The local churches of the mission territories, even those founded and established with their own hierarchy, still continue to need the work of the missionaries from other countries, either because of the vastness of their territory, or because of the increasing numbers of the faithful and the considerable multitude of people who still await the light of the Gospel. One can rightly say of them: "They are by no means foreign, since every Catholic priest finds himself, while discharging his duty, as if in his own country, wherever the Kingdom of God blossoms or is at its beginning."[18]

May all of them work together, therefore, in the harmony of fraternal, sincere and delicate charity, the sure reflection of the love they have for the Lord and His Church; in perfect,

joyful and filial obedience to the bishops "placed (by the Holy Spirit) to rule the Church of God,"[19] each one grateful to the other for the collaboration offered, "of one heart and one soul,"[20] so that the way in which they love one another may show clearly to the people that they are truly the disciples of Him who gave mutual love to men as the first and greatest precept, as His own and the "new" commandment.[21]

II. THE FORMATION OF THE LOCAL CLERGY

PRIMACY OF THE SPIRITUAL FORMATION IN THE EDUCATION OF THE YOUNG CLERGY

Our predecessor had at heart in *Maximum Illud* to inculcate in those who govern the missions that their most assiduous concern should be turned toward "the complete and perfect" formation of the local clergy as being the body "having origin, disposition, mentality and aspirations in common with its co-nationals, and marvelously suited to the instilling of the faith in their hearts, because better than any others it knows the ways of persuasion."[22]

It is hardly necessary to recall that a perfect priestly vocation must be above all directed toward the acquisition of the virtues proper to that holy state, this being the first duty of the priest, "that is to say, the duty of attending to his own sanctification."[23] The new native clergy must enter into holy competition with the clergy of the more ancient dioceses which has given priests to the world who, by their heroism and their obvious virtues and the living eloquence of their example, have deserved to be proposed as models for the clergy of the whole world.

It is especially with sanctity, in fact, that the clergy can show that they are the light and salt of the earth,[24] that is of their own nation and of the whole world, and that they can efficaciously teach the faithful that the perfection of the Christian life is a goal to which all the sons of God can and must aspire with every effort and perseverance, whatever be their origin, their environment, their culture and their civilization. Our paternal mind longs for the day when the local clergy, as spiritual guides, may be able to furnish subjects everywhere capable of educating to sanctity the students of the sanctuary

themselves. We invite the bishops and directors of mission territories not to hesitate from now on in choosing from among the local clergy priests who by their virtue and prudence give assurance of being safe masters in the spiritual formation of their co-national seminarians.

EDUCATION SUITABLE TO THE ENVIRONMENT

As you well know, venerable brothers, the Church has always required its priests to be suited to their mission through a solid and thorough intellectual education. That the young men of every race and nation are capable of this needs no repetition, so much has this become evident by facts and experience. It is obvious that the formation of the local clergy must take into account the factors of the individual environments of the various regions. Valid for all candidates to the priesthood is the very wise norm according to which they must not be formed "in an environment too much apart from the world",[25] because in such case "when they enter society they will then find serious difficulties in their relations with lower classes and with the cultured classes, and it will therefore often happen that either they adopt a mistaken or false attitude toward the faithful, or consider unfavorably the formation they have received."[26]

They must be spiritually perfect priests, but they must also be "gradually and carefully incorporated into that part of the world"[27] which is their lot, so that they may illumine it with truth and sanctify it with the grace of Christ. With this in view, one must insist on the local way of life, even in those things that pertain to the government of the seminary, but not without making use of all those facilities of a technical or material order which are now the property and patrimony of all civilizations, insofar as they represent a real progress toward a higher standard of living and more suitable safeguard of the physical forces.

EDUCATION IN THE SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY AND SPIRIT OF INITIATIVE

The formation of the native clergy, said Our venerable predecessor Benedict XV, must strive to make it capable of taking the government of the new churches into its own hands as soon as possible and of guiding its own co-nationals, through

teaching and the ministry, on the road of salvation.[28] In this respect We deem it supremely opportune that all those, whether foreign or native, who are in charge of this formation, should strive conscienciously toward developing in their students the sense of responsibility and the spirit of initiative,[29] so that they may be capable of assuming quickly and progressively all the duties, even the most important, inherent in their ministry, in perfect harmony with the foreign clergy, but also in an equal measure. This, in fact, will be the proof of the real efficaciousness of the education given them and will constitute the crowning and best reward of those who have contributed to it.

UTILIZATION OF THE LOCAL VALUES

Precisely with a view to an intellectual formation taking into account the real needs and the mentality of each nation, this Apostolic See has always recommended special studies of missiology, not only for the foreign clergy but also for the native clergy. Thus Our predecessor, Benedict XV, decreed the institution of the teaching of missionary matter in the Pontifical Urban Athenaeum of De Propaganda Fide,[30] and Pius XII recorded with satisfaction the erection of the Missionary Scientific Institute within the same Urban Athenaeum and the institution in Rome and elsewhere of faculties and chairs of missiology.[31]

Therefore, the programs of the local seminaries in mission lands will not fail to secure study courses in the various branches of missiology and the instruction in the various studies and techniques especially useful for the future ministry of the clergy of those regions. For this purpose an instruction must be provided which, in the spirit of the most pure and sound ecclesiastical tradition, will carefully form the judgment of priests regarding the local cultural values, particularly those of a philosophical and religious nature, in their relation to Christian teaching and religion.

"The Catholic Church," said Our immortal predecessor Pius XII, "neither scorns nor completely rejects pagan thought, but rather, after having purified it of every dross of error, completes and perfects it with Christian wisdom. It is thus that it gave similar acceptance to the progress in the fields of science and the arts...and to some extent consecrated the special customs and ancient traditions of peoples; the pagan feasts

themselves, transformed, served to celebrate the memory of the martyrs and the divine mysteries."[32]

We Ourselves have already made Our thoughts known on this matter: "Everywhere... where authentic values of art and thought are apt to enrich the human family, the Church is ready to favor these products of the spirit. As is known, the Church does not identify herself with any culture, not even with the Western culture to which her history is so closely linked. For the mission of the Church is of another order, that of the religious welfare of man. But the Church, so rich in youth, that is, constantly renewed by the breath of the Spirit, is always ready to recognize, to welcome, and indeed to encourage all that does honor to the intelligence and to the human heart in other parts of the world which are different from this Mediterranean basin that was the providential cradle of Christianity."[33]

PENETRATION AMONG THE CULTURED CLASSES

Native priests well prepared and trained in such a difficult and important field, in which they are capable of giving worthy contributions, can, under the direction of their bishops, give life to movements of penetration also among the cultured classes, especially in nations of ancient and high culture, according to the example of famous missionaries, of whom it suffices to cite Father Matteo Ricci.

It is also, in fact, the duty of the native clergy "to bring every mind into captivity to the obedience of Christ",[34] as was stated by the incomparable missionary St. Paul, and thus "attract to themselves in their country also the esteem of great personalities and scholars."[35] May the bishops, according to their judgment, provide immediately for the needs of one or more regions by establishing centers of culture in which the foreign missionaries and native priests may be able to put to advantage their intellectual preparation and their experience for the benefit of the society in which they live by choice or birth.

In this field, it is also necessary to recall what was suggested by Our immediate predecessor, Pius XII, that is, that it is the duty of the faithful to develop the Catholic press in all its forms[36] and also to interest themselves in "the modern techniques for the diffusion of culture," since "it is known in our day how important a well-formed and enlightened public opinion is."[37] Not everything will be able to be done everywhere,

but one must not allow any good occasion to escape in providing for these real and urgent needs, even though sometimes "one sows, another reaps."[38]

CAUTIONS IN THE UNDERTAKINGS OF SOCIAL AND CHARITABLE NATURE

The propagation of the truth and charity of Christ is the true mission of the Church, whose duty it is to offer to peoples "in the greatest measure possible, the substantial wealth of its doctrine and its life as promoter of a new Christian social order."[39] The Church in mission territories, therefore, should provide with the greatest possible generosity also undertakings of a social and charitable nature which are of great benefit to the Christian communities and to the people in whose midst these are. But one should be careful however not to burden the missionary apostolate with a combination of institutions of a purely material nature. One should limit oneself to those indispensable services of easy maintenance and of easy use, the operation of which might be placed as soon as possible in the hands of local personnel, and matters should be arranged in such a way that the missionary personnel itself is allowed to dedicate its best energies to the ministry of teaching, sanctification and salvation.

FORMATION IN THE SPIRIT OF UNIVERSAL CHARITY

If it is true that for a most fruitful apostolate it is of primary importance that the native priests know how to estimate the local values with intelligence and caution, what our immediate predecessor said to all the faithful remains all the more valid: "The universal perspective of the Church must be the normal perspective of their Christian life."[40] For this purpose, the local clergy must be informed not only of the interests and events of the universal Church, but it must be educated also to an intimate and universal spirit of charity. St. John Chrysostom said of the Christian liturgical celebrations: "When we are at the altar, we pray above all for the whole world and for the collective interest;"[41] and St. Augustine beautifully affirmed: "If you want to love Christ, spread charity over the whole earth, because the members of Christ are throughout the entire world.[42]

Precisely with the desire of safeguarding in all its purity this Catholic spirit that must animate the work of missionaries, Our predecessor, Benedict XV, did not hesitate to denounce with severe expressions a danger that could lead to a loss of sight of the very high finality of the missionary apostolate, and a resulting compromise of its effectiveness: "It would be a very sad thing," he wrote in *Maximum Illud*, "if some missionary showed himself so neglectful of his dignity as to think more of his fatherland than of heaven, and excessively concerned himself with spreading its power and extending its glory. This manner of acting would constitute a fatal harm to the apostolate, and it would extinguish every impetus of charity in the missionary for souls and would diminish his prestige in the opinion of the people."[43]

This same danger could repeat itself today under other forms, because of the fact that in many mission territories the aspiration of the people to self-government and to independence is becoming general, and the conquest of civil liberty can unfortunately be accompanied by excesses that are by no means in harmony with the authentic and profound spiritual interests of humanity.

We are fully trustful that the native clergy, moved by sentiments and by superior intentions in conformity with the universal demands of the Christian religion, will also contribute to the real good of their own nation.

"The Church of God is Catholic and is not foreign to any people or any nation", said Our same predecessor,[44] and no local church will be able to express its vital unity with the universal Church if its clergy and its people allow themselves to be influenced by an individualistic spirit, by sentiments of ill will toward other peoples, by a misunderstood nationalism that would destroy the reality of the universal charity that edifies the Church of God and which alone is truly "Catholic".

III. THE LAITY IN THE MISSIONS

LAYMEN IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

In insisting on the need of preparing the advent of the native clergy with the greatest zeal and of forming it with enlightened dedication, Our venerable predecessor, Benedict XV,

certainly did not intend to exclude the importance, also fundamental, of a native laity at the height of its own Christian vocation and working in the apostolate. This was done specifically and with every emphasis by Our immediate predecessor Pius XII,[45] who returned several times to this vital question which, today more than ever before, calls for consideration and demands a solution everywhere in the greatest possible measure.

The same Pius XII – and this is to his special merit and praise – with abundant doctrine and renewed incitements warned and encouraged laymen to take up promptly their active posts in the field of the apostolate in collaboration with the ecclesiastical hierarchy. In fact, from the very beginning of Christian history and in all subsequent epochs, this collaboration of the faithful allowed the bishops and the clergy effectively to develop their work among the people, both in the specifically religious field and in the social field.

This can and must also take place in our time, which indeed reveals greater needs in proportion to a numerically greater humanity with multiple and complex spiritual requirements. Furthermore, wherever the Church is founded, it must always be present and active with its whole organic structure, and therefore not only with the hierarchy in its various orders, but also with the laity. It is through the clergy and laymen that it must necessarily perform its work of salvation.

AIMS IN THE FORMATION OF THE LAITY IN MISSION TERRITORIES

In those places where Christianity is newly established, there is not only the question of procuring a great number of citizens for the Kingdom of God with conversions and baptisms, but also of making them suited, through an adequate education and Christian formation, so that each one may assume his responsibilities in the life and future of the Church according to his own condition and possibilities. The number of Christians would mean little if their quality was defective, if the faithful lacked the soundness of the Christian perfection itself and if their spiritual life was shallow; if they were not, after having been born to the faith and to grace, helped to progress in the youth and maturity of spirit that give impetus and encouragement to good. The profession of Christian Faith, in fact, cannot be reduced to statistical data, but must invest the Christian

and change him deeply,[46] and must give meaning and value to all his outward expressions.

SPECIAL DUTIES OF THE CLERGY

Laymen cannot reach this goal of maturity if the clergy, whether foreign or native, does not immediately follow the program already suggested in its essential outlines by the first pope: "You, however, are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a purchased people; that you may proclaim the perfections of Him who has called you out of darkness into his marvelous light".[47]

A Christian instruction and education that is satisfied with the teaching and learning of catechetical formulas and the precepts of Christian morals by a summary casuistry, without the inclusion of practical conduct, would run the risk of procuring the Church of God a flock that might be merely passive. The flock of Christ is, instead, formed by lambs that not only listen to their Shepherd, but also are capable of recognizing Him and of knowing His voice,[48] of following faithfully and with full understanding to the pastures of eternal life[49] so as to one day deserve from the Prince of Shepherds "the unfading crown of glory".[50] It is made up of lambs who, knowing and following the Shepherd who gave His life for them,[51] are ready to dedicate their life to Him and fulfill His will to lead the other lambs who do not follow Him, but who stray far from Him—the Way, the Truth and the Life—to form part of the one and only flock.[52]

The apostolic impetus is essential to the profession of Christian Faith: In fact, "it is the duty of each one to propagate his Faith among others, whether in instructing or confirming the other faithful, as well as warding off the attacks of the unfaithful",[53] especially in times such as ours, when the apostolate is an urgent undertaking because of the difficult circumstances in which humanity and the Church find themselves.

For a complete and intense Christian education to be possible, educators must be capable of finding the most suitable ways and means of penetrating the different psychologies, so that a deep assimilation of truth with all its demands may be facilitated in the new Christians to the maximum degree. As a matter of fact Our Savior imposed upon each one of us the fulfillment of this supreme command: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with

thy whole mind''.[54] The sublimity of the Christian vocation must at an early stage shine before the eyes of the faithful in all its splendor, so that a desire and intention for the virtuous and active life can burn effectively in their hearts, a life modeled on the life of the Lord Jesus Himself, who having assumed human form commanded us to follow His example.[55]

THE DUTY OF THE LAYMAN TO TESTIFY TO THE TRUTH

Every Christian must be convinced of his fundamental and primary duty of being a witness to the truth in which he believes and to the grace which has transformed him. A great Father of the Church said: ''Christ left us on earth that we might become the lighthouses that illuminate, the masters that teach; that we might fulfill our duty as a ferment; that we might behave as angels, as heralds among men; that we might be adults among minors, spiritual men among the carnal, so as to win them over; that we might be the seed bearing much fruit. It would not even be necessary to expound the doctrine, were our lives to shine to such an extent; it would not be necessary to resort to words, were our lives such a testimony. There would be no more pagans, were we to behave as real Christians''.[56]

This, as one readily understands, is the duty of all Christians in the whole world, but it is easy to see that in the mission lands it could yield special and particularly precious fruits for the spreading of the Kingdom of God among those who do not know the beauty of our Faith and the supernatural power of grace, as Jesus exhorted us: ''Even so let your light shine before men, in order that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven''.[57] Similarly St. Peter lovingly admonished the faithful: ''Beloved, I exhort you as strangers and pilgrims to abstain from carnal desires which war against the soul. Behave yourselves honorably among the pagans; that, whereas they slander you as evildoers, they may, through observing you, by reason of your good works glorify God in the day of visitation''.[58]

EFFECTIVENESS OF THE TESTIMONY OF CHARITY

It is necessary that the testimony of the individual be confirmed and amplified by that of the entire Christian community, similar to that which happened in the springtime of the

Church's life when the compact and steadfast unity of all the faithful "in the teaching of the apostles and in the communion of the breaking of the bread and in the prayers"[59] and the practice of the most generous charity was motive for profound satisfaction and mutual edification. They were in fact "praising God and being in favor with all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their company such as were to be saved".[60]

Unity in prayer and in the active participation in the celebration of the divine mysteries in the Church's liturgy contributes in an especially effective way to the wealth of Christian life of both the individual and the community. It is furthermore a marvelous means of education in that charity which is the distinctive sign of the Christian; a charity that is alien to every social, linguistic and racial discrimination, that stretches its arms and its heart out to all, whether enemies or brothers.

It pleases Us to make the words of Our predecessor St. clement, Roman, on this subject Our own: "When (the Gentiles) hear from us that God says: There is no merit for you if you love those who love you, but there is merit if your love your enemies and those who hate you,[61] on hearing these words they admire the very high degree of charity. But when they see that we do not love not only those who hate us but not even those who love us, they laugh at us and the name (of God) is cursed".[62] The greatest missionary, St. Paul, writing to the Romans at the time when he was about to evangelize the Far West, exhorted them to "love without pretense",[63] after having raised a sublime hymn to that virtue without which the Christian is nothing.[64]

THE DUTY TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE MATERIAL NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY

Charity becomes visible besides in material help, as was affirmed by Our immortal predecessor Pius XII: "The body also requires a multitude of members, linked among themselves to help one another. If in our mortal organisms when a limb suffers all the other limbs suffer together with it, the healthy limbs furnishing their own help to the sick ones, so in the Church each member does not live for himself alone but also helps the others for their mutual comfort, and also for a better development of the entire Mystical Body".[65]

The material need of the faithful also includes that of the ecclesiastical organism. It is therefore well that the native

faithful should become accustomed to supporting spontaneously within the limits of their possibilities their churches, their institutions and the clergy who have given themselves entirely to them. It does not matter if this contribution cannot be considerable; the important thing is that it is the concrete testimony of a living Christian conscience.

IV. DIRECTIVES FOR THE LAY APOSTOLATE IN THE MISSIONS

PREPARATION FOR THE APOSTOLATE

The Christian faithful, members of a living organism, cannot remain shut up within themselves, nor can they believe that it is enough to give thought and provision to their own spiritual needs, thereby carrying out all their duties. Each one, instead, must for his own part contribute to the increase and spread of the reign of God upon earth. Our predecessor Pius XII recalled this universal duty to all: "Catholicity is an essential mark of the true Church to such an extent that a Christian is not truly affectionate and devoted to the Church unless he is equally attracted by and devoted to its universality, desiring that it put out roots and flourish in all places of the earth".[66]

All must enter into a contest of holy emulation and give assiduous testimony of zeal for the spiritual welfare of his neighbor, for the defense of his own faith, to make it known to him who is completely ignorant of it, or to him who knows it imperfectly and therefore judges it imperfectly. It is necessary from infancy and throughout adolescence, even among the youngest Christian communities, that the clergy, the families and the various local organizations of the apostolate should inculcate this holy duty.

There are then several particularly happy occasions in which such education for the apostolate may find the most apt place and the most convincing expression. Such for example is the preparation of young people and of newly baptized persons for the Sacrament of Confirmation, by which "there is infused a new force in believers of the defending of Holy Mother Church and the Faith which they have received from Her".[67] This preparation is highly opportune, especially where there exist by local custom special ceremonies of initiation preparing youth for official entry into their social group.

THE CATECHISTS

We cannot fail to mention here the true emphasis of the work of catechists, who in the long history of the Catholic missions have demonstrated themselves to be an irreplaceable help. They have always been the right arm of the workers of the Lord, and they have shared and alleviated the labors to such a degree that Our predecessors considered their recruitment and their most careful formation as being among "the most important points for the spread of the Gospel",[68] and defined them as "perhaps the most classic example of the lay apostolate".[69]

To these We repeat the highest praise, and We exhort them to meditate always more on the spiritual happiness of their station and never to cease every effort for the enrichment and deepening, under the guidance of the hierarchy, of their instruction and moral formation. Catechumens must learn from them not only the rudiments of the Faith but also the practice of virtue, the great and sincere love of Christ and His Church. Every concern dedicated to increasing the number of these most worthy helpers of the hierarchy and to giving them adequate formation, and every sacrifice of the catechists for accomplishing their task in a manner most suited and perfect, will be a contribution of immediate usefulness for the foundation and for the progress of new Christian communities.

CATHOLIC ACTION

In our first encyclical We recalled the multiple grave reasons that make necessary today in all nations of the world the recruiting of laymen "in the peaceful army of Catholic Action, with the intention of having them as collaborators in the apostolate of the ecclesiastical hierarchy".[70] We have also shown Our satisfaction with "what has been done in the past, even in mission territories, by these valuable collaborators of the bishops and priests",[71] and We wish here to renew with all the urgency of the love that urges Us[72] the admonition and appeal of Our predecessor Pius XII "on the necessity that all the laity in the missions, filling the ranks of Catholic Action with abundant numbers, collaborate actively with the ecclesiastical hierarchy in the apostolate".[73]

The bishops of the mission countries, the diocesan and regular clergy, the most generous and well-prepared faithful,

all have made a most praiseworthy effort in translating into act this desire of the Supreme Pontiff, and one may say that everywhere today there is a blossoming of works and projects. One cannot insist enough, however, on the need of adapting conveniently this form of the apostolate to local conditions and needs. It is not enough to transfer to one country that which was done elsewhere, but, under the guidance of the hierarchy and in the spirit of most happy obedience to the holy pastors, it is necessary to act in such a way that the organizations are not overburdened to a point where precious energy is robbed or dissipated in fragmentary movements and excessive specialization which, necessary elsewhere, would be less useful in areas where circumstances and needs are completely different.

In Our first encyclical We also promised to return with greater fullness to the subject of Catholic Action; when We do, the mission countries also will be able to derive profit and new impetus from it. In the meantime, all should work in full concord and with a supernatural spirit in the conviction that only thus will they be able to take pride in themselves, placing their efforts at the service of the cause of God, of spiritual elevation and of the better progress of their people.

FORMATION OF LAY LEADERS

Catholic Action is an organization of laymen "with proper and responsible executive functions".[74] Laymen then compose the directive cadre. This requires the formation of men capable of impressing on the various associations the apostolic drive and of assuring its better functioning. Such would be men and women who, to be worthy of being entrusted by the hierarchy with the central or peripheral direction of the association, must furnish the most ample guarantee of a most sound Christian intellectual and moral formation, by virtue of which they are able "to implant in others that which they already have themselves with the help of divine grace".[75] One can well say that the natural center of this formation of lay leaders of Catholic Action should be the school. And the Christian school will justify its reason for being in the measure that its teachers—priests and laymen, religious or diocesan—succeed in forming solid Christians.

Everyone knows the importance that the school has always had and will continue to have in Christian countries, and how much energy the Church has spent in instituting schools of

every level and grade, and in defense of their existence and prosperity. But a program of forming leaders of Catholic Action, as is obvious, can be incorporated only with difficulty in scholastic courses; so it will most often be necessary to entrust it to a program outside the school that brings together the most promising youth to instruct and form them for the apostolate.

Ordinaries therefore will seek to study the best means to give life to a school of the apostolate, the educational methods of which are obviously different from true and proper scholastic methods. Sometimes it will be a matter of preserving from false doctrine the children and youth who must go to non-Catholic schools. In every case it will be necessary to balance with a particularly intelligent and intense spiritual education, the humanistic and technical education received in public schools, so that this instruction does not produce badly formed individuals, full of pretenses and harmful rather than useful to the Church and people.

Their spiritual formation must be in relation to the level of intellectual development, tending to prepare them to live in a Catholic way in their social and professional circles, and to assume in time their place in organized Catholic life. For such a purpose, in a case in which young Christians are forced to leave their community in order to go to public schools of another city, it will be opportune to consider the establishment of residence halls and meeting places that would assure them a sane religious and moral environment, congenial and apt in directing their capacities and energies toward apostolic ideals.

In attributing to schools this special and particularly efficacious task of forming leaders of Catholic Action, We certainly do not wish to lessen the responsibility of families or deny their influence, which can be even more vigorous and more effective than that of the school, in nourishing within their children the apostolic fire and providing a Christian formation always more mature and ready for action. The family in fact is an ideal and irreplaceable school.

THE FUNCTION OF THE NATIVE LAITY IN VARIOUS FIELDS

The "good fight"[76] for the Faith is fought not only within the secret of the conscience or in the intimacy of the home, but also in public life in all its forms. In all countries of the world

today there are problems of various natures whose solutions are reached most often by an appeal only to human resources, and obedience to principles that are not always in accord with the demands of Christian Faith. Many mission territories are undergoing "a phase of social, economic and political evolution big with consequences for their future".[77]

Problems which in some nations either are already resolved or find the elements of solution in traditions, confront other nations with an urgency that is not free of dangers, because of the chance that hurried and changing solutions might be applied with a deplorable levity of doctrine that does not take into account, or simply contradicts, the religious interests of individuals and of peoples. Catholics for their own private good and the public welfare of the Church cannot ignore such problems. Nor can they wait until prejudiced solutions occur that would constitute perhaps a force too great to overcome, and that would present further obstacles to the evangelization of the world.

It is in the field of public activity that the laity of mission countries has its most direct and preponderant activity, and it is necessary to provide—with the greatest timeliness and urgency—for Christian communities to offer to their earthly countries, for their common good, men who may honor the various professions and activities at the same time they honor with their solid Christian life the Church that has regenerated them through grace, so that the holy pastors may repeat to them the praise we read in the writings of St. Basil: "I have thanked the most Holy God, because even though occupied with public affairs you have not neglected those of the Church; on the contrary, every one of you has been concerned for it as if it were a personal matter on which one's life depended".[78]

In particular, in the field of the problems of the organization of the school—or of organized social assistance, of work, of political life—the presence of native Catholic experts will have the most happy and beneficial influence, if they base their intentions and actions—as is their exact duty, which they may not leave aside without being accused of betrayal—on Christian principles, which a lengthy history shows to be efficient and decisive in achieving the common good.

To this end, as Our predecessor Pius XII, of venerable memory, has already urged, it will not be difficult to convince oneself of the value and importance of the fraternal help that

international Catholic organizations will be able to give to the lay apostolate in mission countries, either on the scientific level with the study of Christian solutions, especially in the social problems of the new nations, or, above all, on the apostolic level for the organization of an active Christian laity.

We are already aware that this has been done and that it is being done in part by lay missionaries who have chosen, either temporarily or permanently, to abandon their country to contribute through many activities to the social and religious welfare of the mission countries; and We ardently pray to the Lord that He multiply the ranks of these generous persons, and that He support them in the difficulties and labors which they meet with apostolic spirit. The secular institutes will be able to give incomparably fruitful help to the needs of the native laity in the mission areas, if with their example they inspire followers, and if they place their strength at the disposition of the ordinaries in hastening the maturity of the young communities.

Our appeal goes also to all those lay Catholics wherever they are emerging in the professions and in public life, that they may seriously consider the possibility of helping their newly acquired brothers, even without leaving their country. Their advice, their experience, their technical assistance will be able, without excessive labor and without serious discomfort, to make at times a decisive contribution. Good men will not lack the spirit of initiative in putting into practice this Our paternal desire, making it known where it will be heard, encouraging good dispositions and finding the best solutions for them.

NATIVE STUDENTS IN WESTERN COUNTRIES

Our immediate predecessor urged bishops to provide, in a spirit of fraternal and disinterested collaboration, for the spiritual assistance of young Catholics coming into their dioceses from mission countries, to enable them to follow studies and to acquire the experience which they will put into practice when they assume directive functions in their own countries.[79] They are exposed to intellectual and moral dangers in a society that is not their own and that often, unfortunately, is not such as to support their faith and encourage their virtue. If each one of you, venerable brothers, takes these things into account, and if you are moved by the awareness of the missionary duty which is incumbent on all holy pastors, you will provide for them with solicitous charity and in the most apt ways.

It will not be difficult for you to find these students, entrusting them to priests and laymen particularly devoted to this ministry, assisting them spiritually, making them know and experience the fragrance and resources of the Christian charity that makes us all brothers and solicitous for one another. To such bountiful and tangible help that you give to the missions there is added that which makes immediately present to you a world which is geographically far away, but which is spiritually also your own.

To these students, then, We wish to send not only all Our love, but also to address an urgent, affectionate warning to carry everywhere and hold high their brows marked by the blood of Christ and by the unction of holy chrism, to profit from their sojourn abroad not only for their professional formation but also for the development and perfection of their religious formation. They will find themselves exposed to many dangers, but they will also be in the good position of drawing many spiritual advantages from their stay in Catholic nations; while every Christian, whoever he may be and in whatever part of the world he was born, has always the duty of good example and of reciprocating spiritual edification.

CONCLUSION

After having spoken, venerable brothers, of the real needs most characteristic of the Church in mission lands, We must express Our deeply felt gratitude toward all those who dedicate themselves to the cause of the propagation of the Faith in the most distant confines of the world. To the dear missionaries of the regular and secular clergy, to the women Religious so exemplarily generous and so valuable to the needs of the missions, to the lay missionaries who readily run to the frontiers of the Faith, We assure them all of Our most particular and daily prayers and of every other help that is within Our power to give. The success of their work, visible also in the spiritual fertility of the young Christian communities, is the sign of the approval and blessing of God, and at the same time attests to the zeal and wisdom with which the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith and the Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Church carry out the delicate tasks entrusted to them.

To all the bishops, clergy and faithful of the dioceses of the whole world who contribute with prayers and offerings to the

spiritual and material needs of the missions We address an exhortation to intensify still more this necessary collaboration. Notwithstanding the scarcity of clergy which worries the Shepherds of even the most ancient dioceses, one does not have the least hesitation in encouraging missionary vocations and the sacrifice of excellent laymen that they may be placed at the disposition of the new dioceses. The supernatural fruits of this sacrifice will soon be gathered.

The zeal of the faithful of the world who are constantly vying in demonstrations of tangible charity to the societies dependent upon the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith carries help from every part of the world to the most useful and urgent destinations, and increases constantly as the needs grow. The solicitous and concrete charity of brothers will encourage the faithful of young communities and will make them feel the warmth of a supernatural affection which grace nourishes in the heart.

Many dioceses and Christian communities of the mission lands undergo suffering and even bloody persecution. To the holy Shepherds who give their spiritual sons the example of a Faith that does not yield even at the price of sacrificing life; to the faithful thus so sorely tried but so dear to the heart of Jesus Christ Who has promised happiness and copious mercy to those who suffer persecution for justice's sake, We address Our exhortation to persevere in their holy fight; for the Lord, always merciful in His inscrutable designs, will not leave them without the help of the most precious graces and of intimate consolation. With the persecuted there is, in the communion of prayer and sufferings, the whole Church of God, sure of the expectation of victory.

Invoking wholeheartedly on the Catholic missions the able assistance of their patrons and their martyr saints, and in a most special manner invoking the intercession of the most Holy Mary, Loving Mother of us all and Queen of the missions, to each of you, venerable brothers, and to all those who in any way collaborate in the spread of the reign of God, We impart with greatest affection the apostolic benediction, that it may be conciliating and a token of the graces of the Heavenly Father revealed in His Son, Savior of the World, and that it may inflame and multiply missionary zeal.

Given at Rome, at St. Peter's, the 28th day of November, in the second year of Our Pontificate.

NOTES

1. *I Peter*, 5:4
2. Cf. *John*, 21:15-17.
3. Cf. Coronation Homily, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, vol. L, 1958, p. 103 sq.
4. Cf. *La propagazione della fede*, Writings of A. G. Roncalli, Rome, 1958, p. 103 sq.
5. Cf. *AAS*, vol. XI, 1919, p. 440 sq.
6. Cf. Ency. Let. of Pius XI *Rerum Ecclesiae*, *AAS*, vol. XVIII, 1926, p. 65 sq.; Ency. Let. of Pius XII *Evangelii praecones*, *AAS*, vol. XLIII, 1951, p. 497 sq.; *Fidei Donum*, *AAS*, vol. XLIX, 1957, p. 225 sq.
7. Ency. Let. *Ad Petri Cathedram*, *AAS*, vol. LI, 1959, p. 497 sq.
8. Cf. *John*, 10:16.
9. Cf. *Matt.* 13:19.
10. Cf. *Acts* 16:9.
11. *Ibid*, 2:5.
12. *Matt.* 28:20.
13. Ency. *Evangelii praecones*, *AAS*, XLIII, 1951, p. 507.
14. Cf. *Matt*, 9:38.
15. Cf. Christmas radio address of Pius XII, *AAS*, XXXVIII, 1946, p. 20.
16. *Luke* 10:2.
17. *Ibid.*
18. Letter of Pius XII to Card. A. Piazza, *AAS*, XLVII, 1953, p. 542.
19. *Acts* 20:28.
20. *Ibid.* 4:32.
21. Cf *John*, 13:34.
22. *AAS*, XI, 1919, p. 445.
23. *Menti Nostrae* of Pius XII, *AAS*, XLII, 1950, p. 686.
24. Cf. *Matt.* 5:13-14.
25. *Menti Nostrae*, *AAS*, XLII, 1950, p. 686.
26. *Ibid.*
27. *Ibid.*
28. *Maximum Illud*, *AAS*, XI, 1919, p. 445.
29. *Menti Nostrae*, *AAS*, XLII, 1950, p. 686.
30. *Maximum Illud*, p. 448.
31. *Evangelii praecones*, AAS, XLII, 1950, p. 500.
32. *Ibid.* p. 522.
33. Discourse to Second World Congress of Negro Writers and Artists, *Osservatore Romano*, April 3, 1959.
34. Cf. *II Cor.* 10:5.
35. *Rerum Ecclesiae*, *AAS*, XVIII, 1926, p. 77.
36. *Fidei Donum*, *AAS*, XLIX, 1957, p. 233.
37. *Ibid.*
38. *John*, 4:37.
39. *Fidei donum*, *AAS*, XLIX, p. 233.
40. *Ibid*, p. 238.
41. *Hom. II* on *II Cor.*, Migne, *PG*, LXI, 398.
42. *In Ep. Ioan, ad Parthos*, Tr. X, c. 5, Migne, PL, XXXV, 2060.
43. *Maximum Illud*, p. 446.
44. *Ibid.* p. 238.
45. *Evangelii praecones*, p. 510 sq.

46. Cf. *Eph.* 4:24.
47. I *Peter* 2:9.
48. Cf. *John* 10:4-14.
49. Cf. *Ibid.*
50. I *Peter* 5:4.
51. Cf. *John*, 10:11.
52. *Ibid.* 14:6.
53. St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.* II-II, q. 3, a. 2 ad 2.
54. *Matt.* 22:37.
55. Cf. *I Peter* 2:21; *Matt.* 11:29; John, 13:15.
56. St. John Chrysostom, Hom. X on *I Tim.*, Migne, PG, LXII, 551.
57. *Matt.* 5:16.
58. I *Peter* 2:11-12.
59. *Acts* 2:42.
60. *Acts* 2:47.
61. Cf. *Luke* 6:32-35.
62. F.X. Funk, *Patres Apostolici*, Vol. I, p. 201.
63. *Romans* 12:9.
64. *I Cor.* 13:2.
65. *Mystici Corporis*, *AAS*, XXXV, 1943, p. 200.
66. *Fidei Donum*, AAS XLIX, 1957, p. 237.
67. *Mystici Corporis*, *AAS*, XXXV, 1943, p. 201.
68. *Rerum Ecclesiae*, *AAS*, XVIII, 1926, p. 78.
69. Discourse of Pius XII to participants in the World Congress for the Lay Apostolate, *AAS*, XLIX, 1957, p. 937.
70. *Ad Petri Cathedram*, *AAS*, LI, 1959, p. 523.
71. *Ibid.* p. 523.
72. Cf. *II Cor.* 5:14.
73. *Evangelii praecones*, *AAS*, XLIII, 1951, p. 513.
74. Letter of Pius XII on Catholic Action, Oct. 11, 1946; *Discourses and Radio Messages of Pius XII*, vol. VII, p. 468.
75. *Ad Petri Cathedram*, *AAS*, LI, 1959, p. 513.
76. Cf. *II Tim.* 4:7.
77. *Fidei Donum*, *AAS*, LI, 1959, p. 524.
78. Ep. 288, Migne, *PG*, 32,855.
79. *Fidei Donum*, *AAS*, XLIX, 1957, p. 229.

THE HOLY FATHER SPEAKS TO MISSIONARIES

Address to Missionaries given on October 11, 1959 at a mission departure ceremony in St. Peter's Basilica in which 500 priests, nuns and laymen received mission crosses.

Beloved missionary children!

The giving of the crucifix is a simple and impressive ceremony. It is like the last, definite act of the consecration to the missionary apostolate, and it is the reason for the deeply felt emotion (which) floods Our mind and exalts the pious masses of faithful.

We gladly celebrate the holy eucharistic mysteries with you and for you. First of all because, gathered around the altar of the Eternal Priest, there may be renewed among us the redeeming sacrifice of Calvary, from which the missionary activity of the Church draws incentive, meaning and effectiveness. We also wanted this moving function (to be held) so that all might see the esteem, the love, and the special affection that We have for so many generous and ardent sons, effectively represented here by your group which is about to leave.

The men and women missionaries of the whole world—far from their families and their country, often deprived of material support and even of spiritual comfort because of the solitude in which they find themselves, because of the difficulties they must overcome—remain enthusiastic and serene for years after their day of departure, eager to serve the Church and the good of civilization.

We are close to and familiar with all the missionaries, and We salute them with vibrant words, with paternal eye and heart.

After seventeen years of service in Our native diocese, the missions were, in fact, Our field of work in Rome, in a period of revival and fervor for the reorganization of missionary works. With a heart full of profound joy We recall the years passed at Propaganda Fide when, among other experiences, We had occasion to know many missionaries personally, to appreciate their solid formation, their ardent apostolic spirit, the sacrifices known only to God.

And during the other missions, entrusted subsequently to Us by Our predecessors, in Bulgaria, in Turkey, in Greece and

in France, We were able to follow this silent and impressive work from close quarters; to admire the houses of formation and the subsequent apostolic work.

We thank the Lord for this, which We cherish among the most distinguished graces granted to Our humble life by His kindness. All these memories are accentuated by the soft light of intense tenderness on this solemn occasion today when a new group of missionaries, the sign of the indefectibility of the evangelic message, joins the other innumerable legions to spread the religion of Christ throughout the world.

Ineffable joy and emotion fill Our heart, and We are happy to extend to you, and to all missionaries, the expression of Our approval of your response to your special vocation and the encouragement to work well.

"Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them. . . . teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you."[1]

You carry the standard of peace in the advance lines of an activity that knows no rest. The Church awaits the golden harvest that will result through your priestly and sacramental ministry, through evangelic teachings, through the efforts of preserving in its integrity the sacred deposit of revelation, communicated with constant new vigor.

Beloved children! The nations await you. With the gentleness of the message of Christ you will carry with you the secret of true peace and of serene progress. With patient and resolute work, the missionaries of every age have contributed toward the elevation of people, illuminating them with the light of the Cross of Christ. It is true that in some countries this work has been forgotten or underestimated, and in some places there have even been various forms of hostility, either open or concealed. But in Our heart We nourish the hope joyfully expressed by Our predecessor, St. Leo the Great: "Persecutions do not belittle the Church, but make it greater; and the field of the Lord is covered constantly with more abundant crops, when the seeds, falling one after another, are reborn in greater numbers".[2]

Therefore, take courage! The Holy Church received from its founder the universal mandate to approach all peoples, so

1. *Matt.* 28, 19, 20.
2. *Serm.* 82; ML54, 426.

as to unite them in one single family, and no human force, no difficulty, no obstacle can weaken the missionary drive that will end only when Jesus "delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He does away with all sovereignty, authority and power . . . . that God may be all in all".[3]

Beloved children! The image of the crucifix which We have given to each of you as the seal and viaticum of your mission will remind you of the road to be followed to assure the full fruitfulness of your work. The Christ nailed to the wood, annihilated by painful torture, extends His hands as if to embrace all men. He will teach at what cost one obtains the salvation of the world. He is the model and example to follow: "He is reached only by those who walk"—these are again words of St. Leo—"along the road of His patience and of His humility. On such a road the pains of toil, the cloud of sadness and the storm of fear are not lacking. You will find the snares of the evil, the persecutions of the infidel, the threats of the powerful, the offenses of the proud, all the things that the Lord of virtues and the King of glory—*dominus virtutum ex Rex gloriae*—encountered in the image (human body) of our infirm state . . . precisely so that, among the dangers of the present life, we may not wish to escape them by fleeing but rather by overcoming them with patience".[4]

Do not place trust in other plans or in the help of human inspiration. Beloved sons, always associate the twofold title which the Lord Jesus has wished to confer on Our (the Pope's) personal weakness in the mysteries of His mercy; keep connected the dual and more serious duty of Father and Shepherd of the universal Church, with the title of the humble Servant of the servants of God.

We shall always be with you. The Christian people will be with you in the toils, in the struggles and in the consolations that await you. We pray and will always pray to the Lord for you, for the souls entrusted to you, for the dear relatives you leave behind in your country, so that He may grant to all the almighty help of His grace.

We now turn with moving prayers to Jesus, Eternal Priest and Victim sacrificed—the salvation of the world.

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3. *I Cor.* 15, 24-28.
4. *Serm.* 67, 6; *ML* 54, 371-2.

Behold, O Lord, these Your sons, priests, Sisters and laymen, who leave everything to bear witness to Your word and to Your heart.

Be for each one of them "the powerful protector, and strong stay . . a cover from the sun at noon, a preservation from stumbling, and a help from failing".[5]

Support them in the difficult moments; sustain their strength; console their hearts; crown their work with spiritual conquests. They do not seek human successes or perishable gains but only Your triumph and the good of souls.

May Your crucified image, which will accompany them for their whole life, speak to them of heroism, of abnegation, of peace, of love; may it be for them a comfort and a guide, light and strength, so that through them Your blessed name may be spread increasingly throughout the world and they, surrounded by an ever greater number of Your sons, may sing to You the hymn of gratitude, glory and redemption.

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5. *Eccli.* 34, 19-20.

PRAYER FOR MISSION CATHOLICS

BY HIS HOLINESS, POPE JOHN XXIII

O Jesus, living Son of God, who became man to reveal the mystery of the Heavenly Father's love and, with the precious sacrifice of Yourself, performed His will of mercy and of salvation of all peoples, we adore You and praise You for having enlightened and redeemed us.

O Jesus, who sent Your Apostles to reap harvests of souls in the fields of the whole world and promised to draw all to Your crucified Self, we thank You for having sent us those people who have taught us Your truth and communicated Your grace to us.

Through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Your mother and our heavenly mother, Queen of Angels and of Saints, we pray to You that we may be worthy sons of Your Church, faithful to Your teaching and to Your commandments, under the guidance and protection of Your vicar on earth, the father of our souls.

Grant that we may be docile to our bishops and priests, for whom we invoke the graces of sanctification and of the apostolate; that we may be, according to Your will, the salt and light of our land and our people.

We beg of You the grace to grow in faith, in hope and in charity, so that we may make everyone know the joy and peace that the Holy Ghost has spread in our hearts, and prepare ourselves for the happiness and glory without end in the paradise that You have opened to all sons of God. Amen.

(The prayer carries a partial indulgence of three years every time it is recited with contrite heart; a plenary indulgence, subject to the usual conditions, once a month when recited piously every day for a month.)

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